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City of Boston

## Residential Energy Saving Tips

There are many things we can all do to help lower our energy costs. Some can be done right away.

### *Save on gasoline:*

- ☐ Shop locally and walk whenever possible.
- ☐ Use public transportation.
- ☐ If you need to drive, car pool if possible and run all of your errands at one time.
- ☐ For optimum gasoline mileage, keep your tires properly inflated.
- ☐ Keep your car serviced with clean filters and oil for optimum mileage.
- ☐ Keep air conditioner use to a minimum.
- ☐ Do not let your car idle.

### *Keep electricity use to a minimum in your home and at work:*

- ☐ Unplug electronics, such as appliances, and televisions when not in use.
- ☐ Keep refrigerator coils clear of obstacles.
- ☐ Shut lights off when a room is not in use.
- ☐ Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps and save \$30 to \$40 over the life of the bulb.
- ☐ Use a toaster oven rather than a conventional.

### *Minimize water usage:*

- ☐ Wash only full loads of dishes. Air drying dishes can cut energy use by one half.
- ☐ Wash only full loads of clothes and air dry.
- ☐ Heating water can account for 15% of your energy costs. Install low-flow shower heads and fix leaky faucets. Contact Boston Water and Sewer Commission for a free water saving kit ([www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org))
- ☐ Repair leaky faucets. A steady drip of hot water can waste many gallons of water and the energy it takes to heat them.

*Keep your home cool in the summer:*

- ❑ Use ceiling fans and/or window fans to keep air circulating.
- ❑ Close blinds in south facing windows during the day.
- ❑ Keep central air conditioning at 78 degrees: save 6% to 7% for every degree above 78 degrees.
- ❑ Purchase air conditioners with programmable thermostats and install in a north-facing window.
- ❑ Keep air conditioners away from lights or other heat sources.
- ❑ In the summer install white window shades or blinds to reflect heat away.

*Keep your home warm in the winter:*

- ❑ Purchase a programmable thermostat for heating and cooling and save up to \$100 per year. Keep thermostats clear of heat sources such as lamps and television sets.
- ❑ Set your heat no higher than 68 degrees\* during the day and lower it in the evening.
- ❑ Set your water heater between 110 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Wrap it in an insulating blanket; be sure to check the manual and labels on the tank first.
- ❑ Make sure your storm windows are in place to keep heat inside.
- ❑ Do not block radiators or heating vents with furniture or draperies and keep vents clear of dust.
- ❑ Keep shades open during the day and closed in the evening to retain heat.
- ❑ An open fireplace damper acts like an open window. Close it when not in use, or install tempered glass doors.
- ❑ Have your heating system serviced once a year and regularly replace furnace filters and save up to 5% on your heating costs.
- ❑ Plug home leaks: install weather-stripping and caulk all doors and windows, and install gaskets behind outlet covers. For less than \$20 in materials, you can save 20% of your heating bill.
- ❑ Install insulation in crawl spaces, attics, walls, and basements.

\* Landlords are required to provide specific heat levels under the State Sanitary Code.

*Have a free energy audit of your home:*

- ❑ Contact Nstar ([www.Nstar.org](http://www.Nstar.org)) and/or Keyspan ([www.Keyspan.org](http://www.Keyspan.org)) for a free energy audit.
- ❑ Visit the Department of Energy's web site at [www.eere.energy.gov/energy](http://www.eere.energy.gov/energy) for additional tips